



ASHEBORO

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Exactly where I want to be.

2018-2023 Central Business District Redevelopment Plan

City of Asheboro, North Carolina

Developed by the Redevelopment Commission

Approved by the Asheboro City Council on June 7, 2018

**2018-2023 Central Business District Redevelopment Plan
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I. INTRODUCTION

North Carolina Urban Redevelopment Law, N.C.G.S. 160A-500 et seq., provides a mechanism to empower and assist local governments in efforts to promote programs of redevelopment in areas suffering from blight. On October 2, 2017, the City of Asheboro Planning Board deliberated and certified the area identified by Randolph County Parcel Identification Numbers 7751726479, 7751725650, 7751738346, 7751831174 and 7751733983, and inclusive of all adjacent streets and right-of-ways, a Redevelopment Area and directed the City of Asheboro Redevelopment Commission to prepare a redevelopment plan. The Planning Board's certifying resolution is incorporated into this plan by reference.

The 2018-2023 Central Business District Redevelopment Plan describes potential activities to be undertaken in the Redevelopment Area to facilitate property rehabilitation, conservation, and reconditioning. The plan has been prepared in accordance with the North Carolina Urban Redevelopment Law. The Redevelopment Commission recognizes that public and private investments have revitalized much of downtown and wishes to support the momentum that has reinvigorated the Central Business District into a hub of commercial and cultural activity. To this end, the plan outlines actions that the city and business community can take to further strengthen downtown and build on twenty-plus years of successes outlined in the table below:

PROJECT	IMPACT	EST. INVESTMENT	YEAR
Bicentennial Park	New downtown greenspace for public events and recreation	\$250,000	1996
Sunset Ave. Streetscape	Installed new street trees, curb and pedestrian improvements	\$250,000	2004
Farmers' Market	Convenient location for direct sale of foods from farmers to consumers	\$200,000	2005
Cultural and Recreation Office	Renovation of former federal building into service and administrative center	\$75,000	2009
Sunset Theatre	Rehabilitation of downtown landmark into performing arts venue	\$1.7 MM	2013
Asheboro Mill Lofts	Transformation of two abandoned downtown mills into affordable housing	\$5.6 MM	2013
City Hall Renovation	Modernization of historic municipal headquarters	\$90,000	2014
Senior Center	31,500-square-foot multi-purpose center	\$3.5 MM	2014
Downtown Parking lot	Parking lot improvements to support downtown businesses and city festivals	\$130,000	2017
Recreation Center	Upfit of former private recreation center into city's first comprehensive public indoor recreation facility	\$900,000	2017

Figure 1 | Public-Supported Community Investment in Downtown

The Redevelopment Commission views this plan as a tool to improve economic conditions downtown. The plan advocates for the allocation of public funds to incentivize the redevelopment of distressed properties, through rebuilding and improving structures in various states of disrepair and obsolescence. Furthermore, the plan demonstrates to the public the city's commitment to downtown revitalization. The Commission acknowledges that economic conditions can change unexpectedly and therefore intends for this plan to be adaptable in order to take advantage of opportunities and address threats related to the plan's implementation.

The 2018-2023 Central Business District Redevelopment Plan relies on statutory authority to improve blighted areas and areas in need of rehabilitation, conservation, and reconditioning. Under state law, blighted areas contain buildings or improvements that, by reason of "dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence," ... "substantially impairs the sound growth of the community, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare." State law describes rehabilitation, conservation, and reconditioning areas as posing a "clear and present danger" that in the reasonably foreseeable future an area will become a "blighted area" unless the city takes action.

II. DESCRIPTION OF REDEVELOPMENT AREA

A. Area Boundary and Existing Uses

The area's boundary is identified by Randolph County Parcel Identification Numbers 7751726479, 7751725650, 7751738346, 7751831174 and 7751733983 and inclusive of all adjacent streets and right-of-ways. A map of this boundary is shown in Figure 2.

The area includes seven buildings on five parcels and has a total area of approximately 12.73 acres. Buildings range in age from more than 60 years old to more than 100 years old and four are designated or contributing *National Register of Historic Places* structures. All of the uses originally occupying the buildings, which were primarily textile manufacturing or railroad oriented, have ceased; age and obsolescence of the buildings therefore are the primary impediments to re-use. None of the buildings have been upfitted to comply with current building and fire code requirements. The principal use of the buildings is storage. Three buildings are unoccupied and undergoing stabilization work and one is vacant.

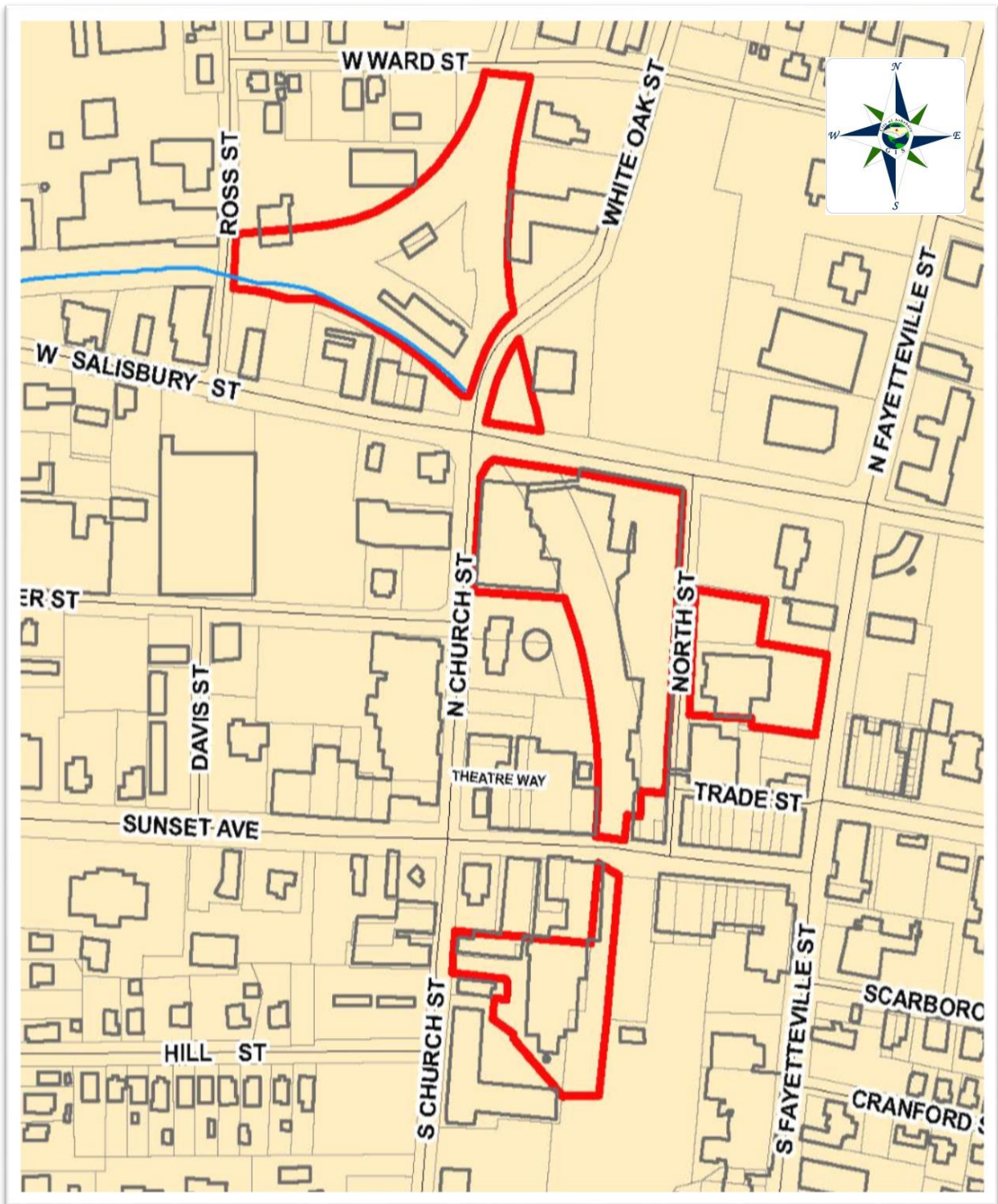


Figure 2 | Redevelopment Area Boundary

B. Existing Zoning

Four zoning districts and an overlay zone are applicable in the Redevelopment Area: RA6 High Density Residential, B2 General Commercial, B3 Central Commercial, I2 Industrial Development and the Center City Planning Area (CCPA) Tiers 1 and 2. District descriptions from the Asheboro Zoning Ordinance are as follows.

RA6 High Density Residential: The RA6 Residential District is intended to produce a high intensity of residential uses in close proximity to major nodes of non-residential development, characterized primarily by group housing, plus the necessary governmental and other support facilities to service that level of development.

B2 General Commercial: The B2 General Commercial District is intended to serve the convenience goods, shoppers goods retail and service needs of the motoring public, both local and transient.

B3 Central Commercial: The B3 Central Commercial District is intended to be applied to the traditional commercial, governmental, administrative and service core of Asheboro, commonly known as the Central Business District.

I2 Industrial Development: The intent of the I2 Industrial Development District is to produce areas for intensive manufacturing, warehousing, processing and assembly uses, controlled by performance standards to limit the effect of such uses on adjacent districts.

CCPA Tier 1: The Central Business Planning Area (Tier 1) is hereby established to strengthen Asheboro's Center City Planning Area by incorporating a mix of commercial, office, institutional, residential and public open space uses. Design standards for revitalization and new development in the Central Business Planning Area encourage a pedestrian oriented mix of multi story buildings located close to the street and containing an attractive mix of first-story storefronts, ample sidewalks and street trees.

CCPA Tier 2: The Central Fringe Planning Area (Tier 2) is hereby established to strengthen Asheboro's Center City Planning Area. This planning area encompasses blocks adjacent to Tier 1, the core Central Business Area. Properties in this planning area, unlike those in Tier 1, are not readily accessible to public downtown parking. Coordinated development of a variety of mixed uses is encouraged. These uses include retail, professional and financial businesses, dwellings, institutional, industrial, governmental and other public facilities.

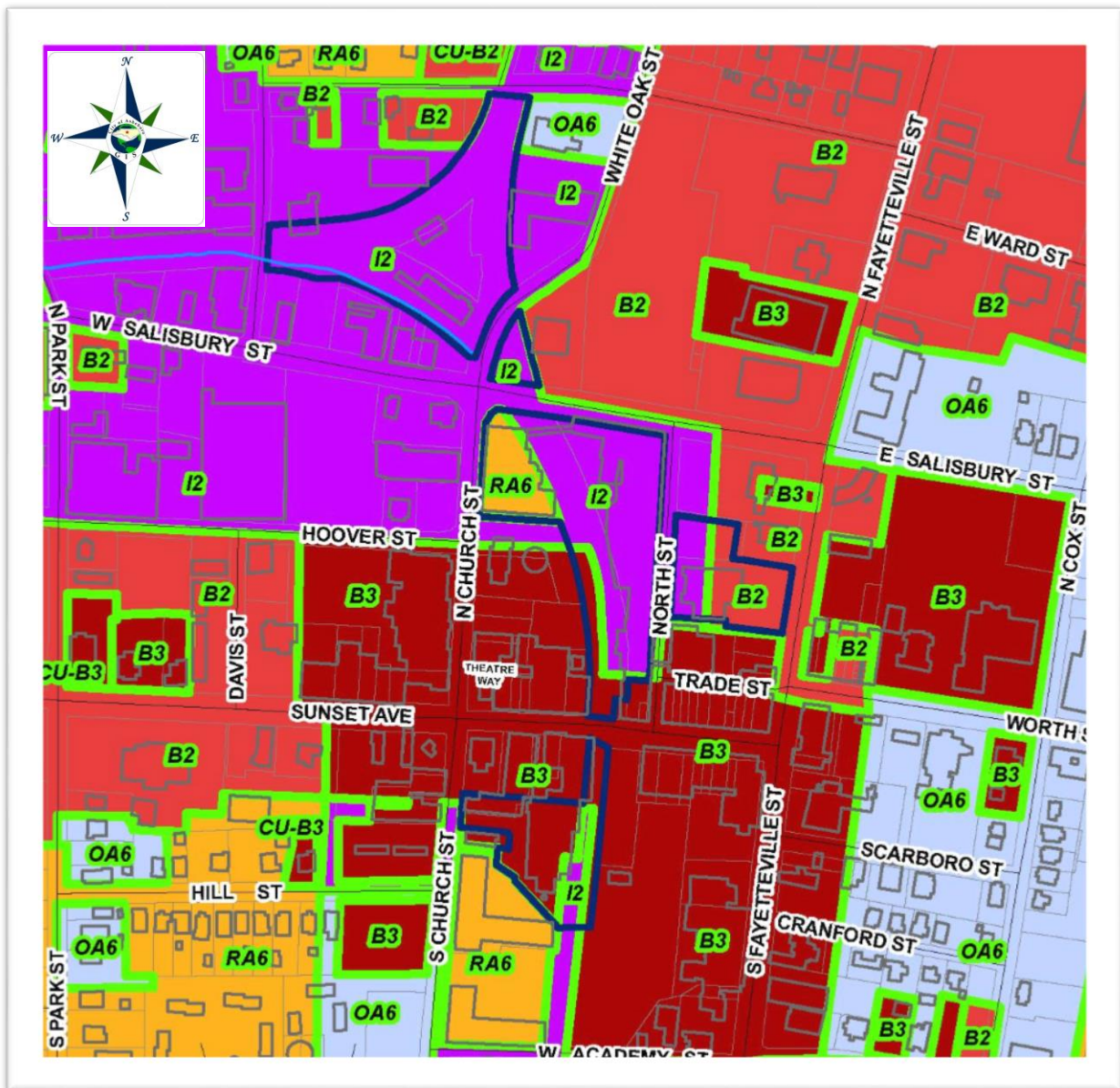


Figure 3 | Existing Zoning

III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This Redevelopment Plan's goal is to eliminate urban blight by encouraging new economic opportunities through public-private partnerships. Furthermore, the Redevelopment Commission anticipates that future investment stimulated through the support advocated for by this plan will positively influence growth and development beyond the Central Business District.

Consistent with this goal, objectives include:

- Alleviating conditions which contribute to deterioration, blight, and other deficiencies which are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals and welfare, and also to the functional unity, aesthetic appearance, and economic welfare of the area;
- Offering grants and construction financing to increase the feasibility of renovating, repairing, and enhancing buildings in the area;
- Incentivizing buildings in the area to be brought into compliance with current building and fire codes and accessibility requirements;
- Encouraging and supporting new businesses that locate or expand in the downtown area through marketing assistance to create messaging, branding and promotion that will: increase foot traffic and facilitate job creation that may benefit the area's low to moderate income individuals;
- Providing quality housing for vulnerable populations;
- Undertaking public improvements, including enhanced off-street parking opportunities, to provide a physical environment that will spur private investment;
- Assisting with utility upgrades to enhance the aesthetics of and access to the area's infrastructure;
- Implementing the vision of the city's 2020 Land Development Plan that promotes a mixture of compatible land uses, including residential and commercial, downtown;
- Improving the public network of street and sidewalk infrastructure;
- Preserving the area's important historic and architectural assets.

IV. PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Redevelopment actions proposed by this plan are intended to be executed within the next five years. Several activities can commence shortly after adoption as two of the five properties already have building stabilization efforts underway. Actions targeting the other three properties can be underway within the plan's five-year timeframe provided there is private support. It is important to note that this plan is not intended to limit other appropriate and permissible redevelopment opportunities that may be presented. A description of potential projects and recommended actions within the area are described below.

A. Projects and Associated Public Action

PROJECT #1: The Square on Church
PROPERTY OWNER: VSR, LLC
TIMEFRAME: 2018-2020

The Square on Church is envisioned to be a mixed use destination with restaurants, retail, office and shared workspaces, spa and boutique hotel. The project is the vision of successful entrepreneurs Dustie Gregson and Jerry Neal who together comprise VSR, LLC.

The Square on Church, aptly named for its location on South Church Street, will sit on approximately 1.3 acres. Upon completion, the development will present a total of 60,000 square feet of restored building area in three masonry buildings, the oldest of which was constructed in 1917. The site also contains an iconic 115' smokestack that will be preserved and serve as a reminder of the property's former association with the hosiery and furniture industries.

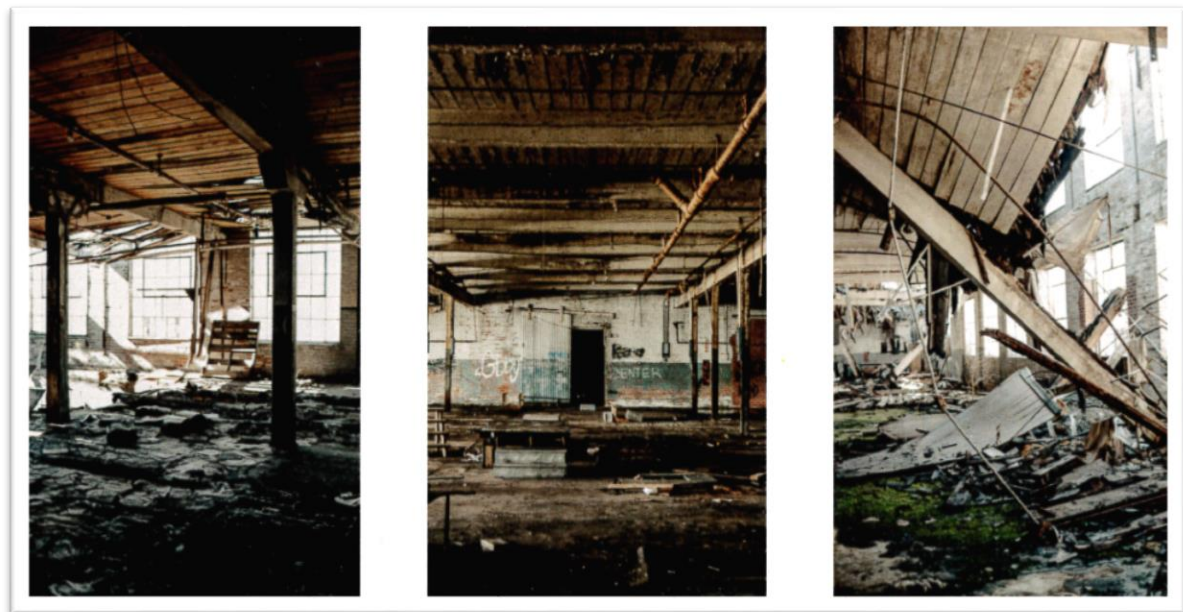


Figure 4 | Mill Conditions Prior to Recent Stabilization Efforts

The stabilization and restoration of these structures is in the public's interests for a number of reasons. Most importantly, the largest of the structures was almost lost to fire in 2012 and since that time major portions of the building have continued to deteriorate, threatening to endanger the public and damage adjacent buildings. Further, the project will provide the southern anchor of commercial activity within the Central Business District and includes two National Register buildings, one of which has already been successfully retrofitted into The Table Farmhouse Bakery restaurant. It is projected that up to 200 full and part-time jobs will be created by the \$5-plus million development.

Redevelopment of the property is complex and likely will require public participation to ensure viability. The project will cause demand for off-street parking to rise and the city is best positioned to address this increased need. Likewise, pedestrian activity will grow in the area and new sidewalk construction to serve the development and an enhanced pedestrian crossing on South Church Street will be warranted. The need for improved drainage infrastructure via new curb, gutter and catch basins also is anticipated. In addition, assurances for public safety through modifications of the former industrial power supply and timely service delivery, including emergency service, are essential and the city should assist with the required electric conversion and pursue public access from Academy Street to the project. Finally, public support in the form of grants and construction financing can provide essential gap funding.

PROJECT #2: ACME-MCCRARY EAST MIXED-USE
PROPERTY OWNER: ACME-MCCRARY CORPORATION
TIMEFRAME: 2019-2023

The Acme-McCrary Corporation has deep roots in Asheboro and owns more than three acres of property in the Redevelopment Area. The company began manufacturing hosiery in 1909 and its manufacturing portfolio recently was acquired by MAS Holdings, a Sri-Lankan based apparel manufacturer. The acquisition leaves Acme-McCrary with its downtown real estate assets, including a historic building and smokestack that were added to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2014. According to the NRHP registration, the oldest part of the structure is a two-story, heavy-timber-frame, brick mill on the east side of the railroad. Subsequent expansions to the original building include two- and three-story brick, heavy-timber, structural-steel, and reinforced-concrete-framed dye house, mill, and warehouse additions that extend west toward the railroad and south to commercial buildings on Sunset Avenue's north side.

In 2012, the city partnered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to identify smart growth approaches that can incorporate mixed income housing, redevelopment and revitalization for the downtown area through the *Sustainable Communities Building Blocks* program.

An analysis of the Acme-McCrary complex found that preservation and adaptive reuse potential exists due to the size and layout of the building floor plate. That effort recommended, and this plan concurs, that the first step in the pursuit of potential redevelopment options for the property should be a public-private partnership to prepare a feasibility study that includes an environmental and structural evaluation.



Figure 5 | Concept Plan for Acme-McCrary Building from 2012 Sustainable Design and Development Report

PROJECT #3: ACME-MCCRARY WEST SENIOR HOUSING
 PROPERTY OWNER: ACME-MCCRARY CORPORATION
 TIMEFRAME: 2018-2020

Acme-McCrary also owns property on the west side of the railroad at the intersection of West Salisbury Street and North Church Street. Roughly 50,000 s.f. of building is located on just under one acre; the former Parks Hosiery Mill, built in the 1920's and McCrary's Mill No. 2, built in the 1930's, historically used the space which today is largely vacant. The structure is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

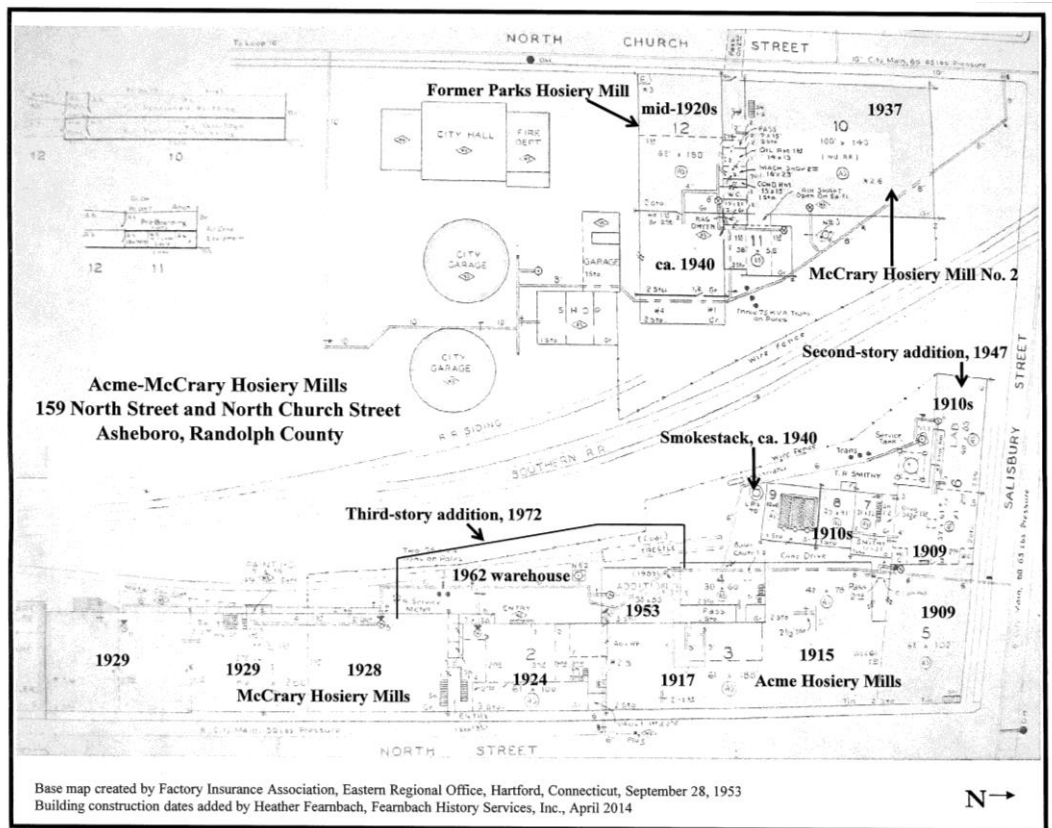


Figure 6 | Acme-McCrary Hosiery Mills from NRHP Registration

The property recently has been identified for potential redevelopment as a senior housing complex, a prospect made more appealing by an existing second-story pedestrian walkway over North Church Street that connects to the Randolph County Senior Adults Association's primary campus. This campus boasts 30,000 square feet of multi-purpose senior-focused space housed in another former Acme-McCrary mill. It is estimated that approximately 40-50 dwelling units could be housed in the complex and the city has recent examples of successful adaptive reuse projects. In 2013, the Asheboro Mill Lofts opened one block south after renovation of another historic mill. That project required an element of public financing and city-sponsored infrastructure improvements to become reality and city support may be necessary for this project. This plan encourages efforts, public and private, to carry out this senior housing project.

PROJECT #4: CITY RECREATION CENTER
 PROPERTY OWNER: CITY OF ASHEBORO
 TIMEFRAME: 2018-2020

The City of Asheboro is committed to renovating a 1940's era recreational center formerly owned by the Acme-McCrary hosiery mills and built as an employee fitness center following World War II. In May, 2017, the company transferred the property to the City of Asheboro to ensure its long-term viability and rehabilitative work started almost immediately. The city plans

to replace the roof, update heating and cooling systems, install new flooring in much of the facility, and improve accessibility with new compliant ramps and an elevator system.

While built for employees and their families in 1949, thanks to the generosity of the Acme-McCrary corporation the recreation center was widely used by the community from the beginning. As a result of the 2017 acquisition of Acme-McCrary manufacturing assets by MAS Holdings, Acme-McCrary was in a position to convey the property to the city with the hope that citizens will continue to benefit from the facility. The facility ultimately will house a refurbished gymnasium, indoor swimming pool, fitness rooms, demonstration kitchen and flex space.

The city intends to have the facility renovated in 2019. The project will not only be an asset for public health efforts and preserve a community landmark but also will catalyze investment in downtown.

PROJECT #5: RAILROAD DEPOT
PROPERTY OWNER: NORFOLK SOUTHERN
TIMEFRAME: 2020-2023

Completed in 1946 by the High Point, Randleman, Asheboro & Southern Railroad, the Asheboro Freight Depot reflects back to a transformative time for the city, lead by rail. Large and modern for its day, the brick depot consisted of a general office and agent office at the east end, a considerably sized freight room with separate express office at the west end, a concrete railway loading platform along the entire south side and extending beyond the west end, and ample space for truck loading along the north side. Concrete floors run throughout the building. The depot was utilized by the railroad until the late 1980s and now sits vacant.



Figure 7 | Asheboro Freight Depot

Discussions about renovating and reutilizing the depot have occurred informally in recent years, however, redevelopment has not occurred. The depot's central location and close proximity to the headquarters of Regional Consolidated Area Transportation Services (RCATS) make the property ideal for a transportation hub should the city launch a fixed route bus service in the future. The Depot's large exterior loading platform also lends itself well for transformation into an eating establishment, retail use, or a cultural asset. Obstacles to redevelopment include the current owner's interest in maintaining the property as is to support railroad operations. Other constraints include the absence of pedestrian connectivity with the core of the central business district. The property is separated from the heart of downtown by the rail line and a major thoroughfare, and no adequate pedestrian crossing signals, crosswalks nor sidewalks exist to create a safe, walkable connection. Partnership between the city, NCDOT, and Norfolk Southern to address the preceding infrastructure limitations may be a necessary part of any redevelopment project for this site. Property acquisition or long term lease by the city, with the willing support of Norfolk Southern, could also be a means to address infrastructure and site limitations.



Figure 8 | Asheboro Freight Depot in mid-1900's

B. Street Layout Changes

In order to facilitate safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian movements and the provision of public services, it may be advisable for the city to construct two public streets or alleys on property presently owned by VSR, LLC. Publicly maintained access from Church Street and Academy Street would help to provide continuous, redundant and unfettered access to an area of dense development and intense commercial activity. The locations of these potential public-ways are shown in Figure 9.

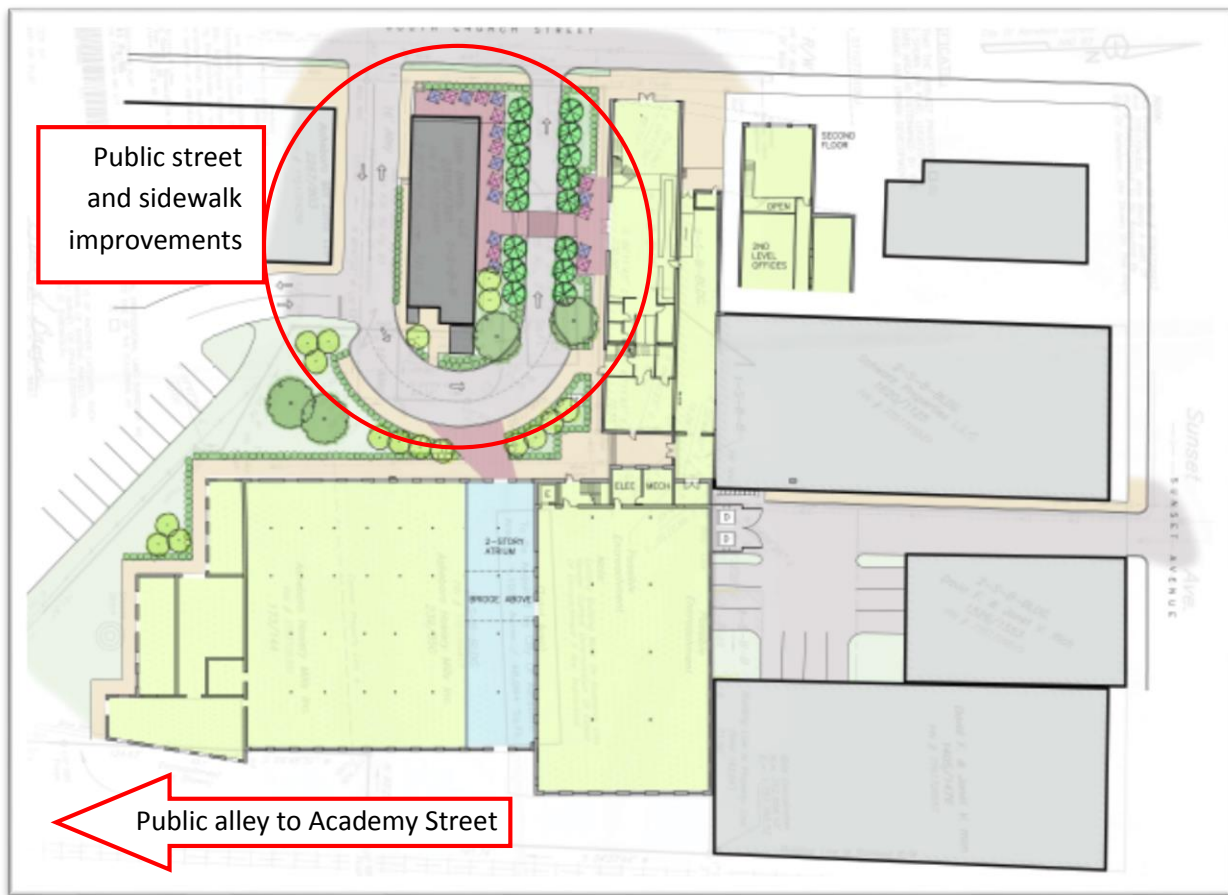


Figure 9 | Potential Public Street and Sidewalk Improvements

C. Transportation and Utilities

The city's adopted 2014 Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) classifies Church Street and Sunset Avenue as minor thoroughfares and Salisbury Street as a major thoroughfare in need of improvements due to capacity issues. The plan also recommends a future bus route provide deviated fixed route service to and from the redevelopment area. Existing sidewalks generally are in good condition in the area although the CTP does recommend enhanced maintenance for segments on Salisbury Street. The CTP also proposes the installation of new sidewalks adjacent to the Norfolk Southern property. Due south of the redevelopment planning area, Church Street was converted from a four-lane to three-lane cross-section with wider lanes and "shared lane" markings to accommodate bicycle traffic.

Sewer service to the redevelopment area is provided via 8" outfalls. Water service is provided through a network of 6-10" water mains. Water pressure is adequate and existing fire hydrants are sufficient for fire suppression. As is typical in most downtowns of older cities, the sewer and water infrastructure is aged but is upgraded when required or opportunities arise; no utility improvements beyond general maintenance are necessary or proposed to implement this plan.

Projected power and other utility service needs, namely robust network capabilities, likely will differ from the prior, industrial-centered uses and service upgrades within the Plan area may be required. Such work, if required, should take place in conjunction with other improvements or project construction.

D. Proposed Zoning Amendments

Current zoning regulations affecting redevelopment generally include requirements to provide conforming parking areas and new landscaping. Property sizes and configurations combined with historic development patterns, often can lead to conflict between zoning compliance interests and redevelopment and historic preservation interests. In order to ease these potential conflicts, an investigation of extending adaptive reuse provisions allowable in Tier 1 into the Redevelopment area should occur.

Furthermore, certain supportive land uses such as medical offices, restaurants and banks are not permitted by right throughout the planning area. This plan advocates for city-led efforts to work with property owners and the planning board to amend the zoning ordinance text and map with the goal of addressing these regulatory impediments.

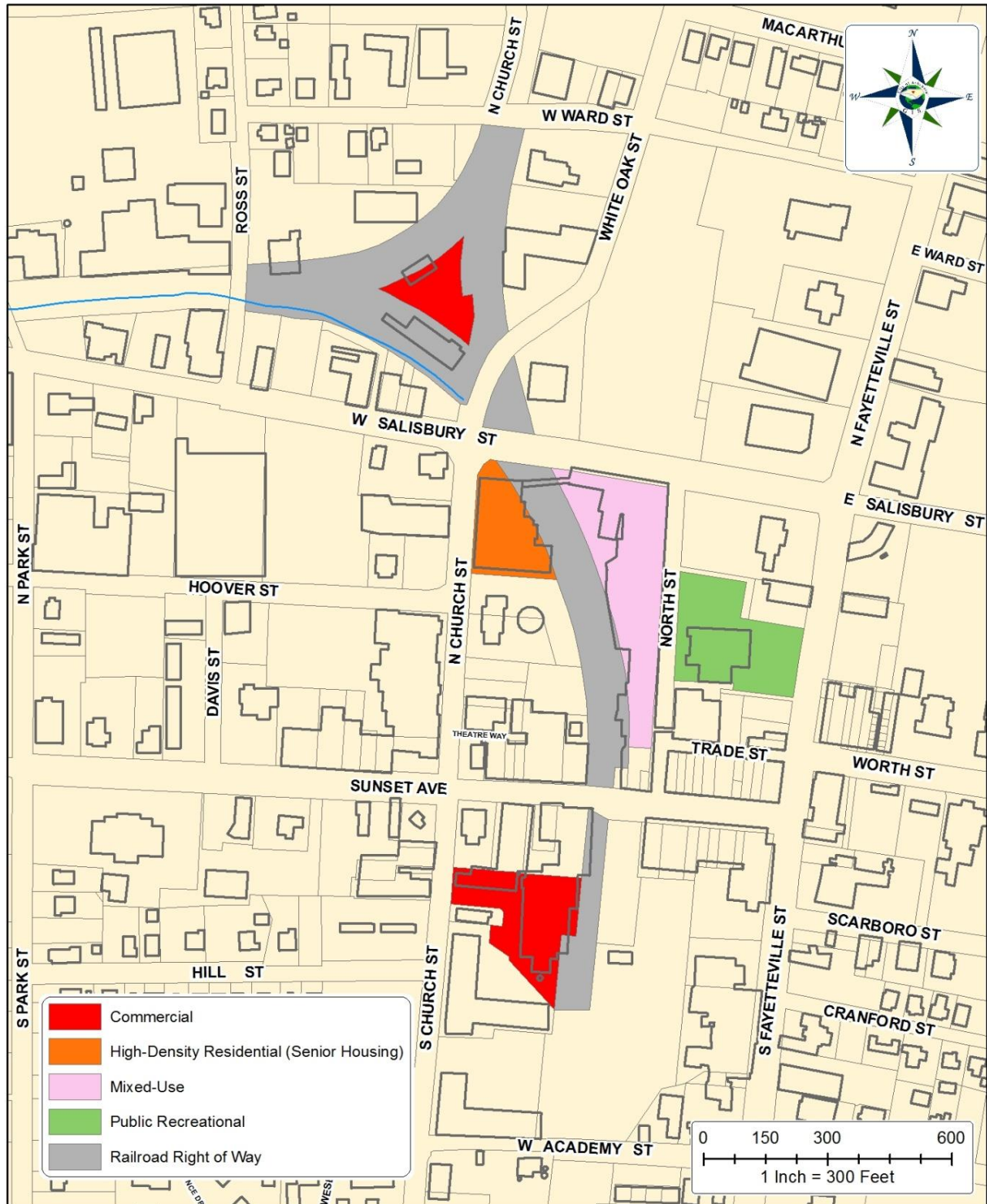
E. Policies in Support of Redevelopment

In addition to the specific actions recommended to be taken by the city to further advancement redevelopment projects, it is this plan's recommendation that the following steps be taken in furtherance of envisioned outcomes:

- Waiver of all permit fees normally charged, including water and sewer connection and applicable impact charges, for development consistent with this plan; and
- Budget \$100,000 per fiscal year in appropriations for the next five years to fund required feasibility studies and street, parking, sidewalk and other public infrastructure maintenance and enhancements in the planning area.

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V. Proposed Future Land Use Map



VI. Projected Population Density, Land Coverage and Building Intensities

The residential component of the redevelopment area is expected to result in a population density between eight and twelve persons per acre. Land coverage will increase slightly over present-day levels largely as a result of planned street construction; it is estimated that land-coverage exceeds 80% today. Building use or intensity likely will rise as new occupants move into spaces most recently used for storage. There is, however, a limit to increased intensity potentials due to existing development and railroad right-of-way adjacent to the redevelopment boundary that preclude substantial expansion of current building footprints.

VII. Estimated Cost and Method of Financing

City expenses related to plan implementation are recommended to be capped at \$100,000 per year for the next five years. Total public expenditures should not exceed a total of \$500,000 over a five year period. All other expenses should be borne by the private sector and non-city entities.

VIII. Continuing Controls Contributing to Implementation

The following are city regulations or programs currently in place that are conducive to plan implementation:

- The Asheboro Zoning Ordinance's Center City Planning Overlay which prescribes development standards designed to promote a stable, attractive, economically viable, and pedestrian-scaled environment.
- The Asheboro Non-Residential Building Maintenance Code which establishes standards of maintenance, sanitation, and safety for nonresidential buildings or structures and further identifies the circumstances under which a public necessity exists for the repair, closing, or demolition of nonresidential buildings or structures that are dangerous to the public health, safety, and welfare.
- The Asheboro Code Enforcement program which is focused on the active prevention and correction of regulatory violations.
- The city's on-going participation in the N.C. Main Street Downtown Associate Community program which provides organizational assistance with a concentration on downtown revitalization.

IX. Statement Attesting Non-Displacement of Families

No person or family considered to be a lawful occupant shall be required to move as a result of any activity recommended to be undertaken by this plan, including but not limited to acquisition, demolition or rehabilitation.

X. Preliminary Site Plan

